

# Daily Worker's Foreign Editor Resigns

By Murry Weiss

SEPT. 10—The resignation of the Daily Worker's foreign editor, Joseph Clark, from the staff of the paper and from the Communist Party, is the most recent manifestation of the prolonged and deepening crisis that has wracked the American CP since the Khrushchev revelations and the Hungarian revolution last year. Rumor of the resignation was reported in the Sept. 8 New York Times by Harry Schwartz who asked Clark, for comment. Clark replied, "I regret that my old friend Bill Foster made his statement to the New York Times. What I have to say in this matter will appear in the Daily Worker."

## AFTER 28 YEARS

The Sept. 9 Daily Worker published Clark's resignation. "After 28 years of association," he said, "I'm resigning from both [the Party and the paper's staff] because I find it is no longer possible to serve the cause of American socialism through them."

Emphatically reaffirming his socialist convictions, Clark said: "I continue to adhere as strongly as ever to the ideal which brought me into the Communist movement—a world free from

poverty, racism, injustice and war."

Clark cited the figures released by the recent National Committee meeting of the CP which showed that 7,000 of the estimated 17,000 members left the party during the last year. "Among those who left the party before me," Clark said, "were the great majority of its working class and Negro members, active trade unionists, as well as writers, scientists, professional and also party organizers, Smith Act prisoners, Daily Worker editors and reporters."

In his comment on Clark's resignation today, Daily Worker Editor in Chief John Gates, expressed regret at Clark's decision. "I disagree with Clark," he said, "that the Communist Party has become a hindrance to socialism."

## INNER-PARTY STRUGGLE

Gates declared that "a struggle is now going on in the Party" between "those who want to advance the ideas adopted by the recent national convention of the Party to again become an effective political movement in our country" and "those who opposed these new policies before the convention and who resist, obstruct and seek to reverse them now." Gates argued that res-

ignations such as Clark's weakened this "real struggle [which] has not yet come to a definitive conclusion."

The group Gates says is obstructing the National Convention's decisions is headed by William Z. Foster. The Foster group has been gaining ground ever since the convention last February largely as a result of the continued mass exodus from the party and the feeling of many remaining CP members that the Gates group represents a right wing current. Both groups claim to base themselves on the convention decisions.

At the July 27-28 National Committee meeting Gates denounced the campaign of the Foster group to remove Clark as foreign editor of the Daily Worker and quoted one of his friends as saying: "We have saved the Party twice. We saved the Party first from Browder in 1945, and we went down from a membership of 75,000 to 17,000. And now we have saved the Party from Gates! And we've gone down from 17,000 to 10,000. The more we save the Party, the more the Party is disappearing."

Gates' treatment of Clark's resignation, while expressing disagreement with the step, was extremely sympathetic—even friendly. Referring to a farewell party the Daily Worker staff gave Clark a few days ago, Gates said, "We parted in sorrow and not in anger, as friends, not enemies."

## SOURCE OF CRISIS

In his Sept. 10 comment on Clark's resignation, Gates said: "It is easy to condemn Clark for his action and necessary to disagree with mistaken views that he may hold. Far more difficult is it to analyze the fundamental causes of the loss of 45% of our membership in the past year, of which the resignation of Clark is another symptom."

At the July National Committee meeting, Sid Stein, National Organization Secretary of the CP, in discussing the causes for the heavy losses in membership, reduced all explanations to "the common denominator that underlies all these reasons. . . the serious weakening of what some of us call our moorings or our ideological foundations." Stein, as all the other CP leaders, failed, however, to specify why and how the "ideological foundations" of the CP have been seriously weakened. He confined himself to a few speculations concerning the psychological reactions of the party membership to the Khrushchev revelations.

Clark, on the other hand, sets

out to provide a serious explanation in his letter of resignation. "My view," he said, "is that socialism can be served only by a complete break with Stalinism. The latter perverted socialism by substituting autocracy for democracy. But Marxists have always advocated socialist democracy, which they uphold as more libertarian than any yet attained."

In one of his last columns in the Daily Worker, Clark tried to find the social basis for this rise of an autocratic bureaucracy in the Soviet Union by citing Isaac Deutscher's analysis of the historical circumstances which gave rise to Stalinism. It is well known that Deutscher, for all his profound differences with Trotskyism, has based his entire analysis of the Soviet bureaucracy on the theoretical work of Leon Trotsky.

Moreover, Clark attacked the Stalinist version of "proletarian internationalism" as expressed in French Communist Party leader Jacques Duclos' letter to the American CP's National Convention. Duclos said that proletarian internationalism "implies solidarity with the foreign policy of the Soviet Union." In reply to this conception, Clark said, "In 1956 proletarian internationalism required solidarity with the Hungarian workers opposing Soviet intervention. It demanded support for the Hungarian workers who formed a solid phalanx of workers councils and for their 100 percent solid general strike."

Clark's open break with Stalinism lacks consistency and thought-out conclusions. He fails to connect the policy of Stalinism in the Second World War and the present foreign policy of the Kremlin with the Stalinist perversion of socialism. Nor does he see the relation of Stalinism to the basic policy of the CP in the U.S.—the class-collaborationist conception of a "people's anti-monopoly coalition" and continued support to "lesser evil" capitalist politicians.

Nevertheless, by calling for a break with Stalinism, Clark has gone to the root of the problem that faces the disoriented and demoralized ranks of the radical workers who are seeking a revolutionary road out of the crisis of the CP. By basing his break with Stalinism on a socialist opposition to American capitalism at home and abroad, Clark gives promise of playing a vital and constructive role in the current regroupment movement of revolutionary socialist forces in the United States. Class conscious workers and revolutionary youth, in and out of the Communist Party, can only hope that this promise will be fulfilled.

## Letters from Readers

### Criticizes Ceylon Trotskyists

Editor:

When I read in the Aug. 5 issue about the visit of the Ceylonese Lanka Sama Samaja representatives to the Soviet Union and China, the account made me angry. Why the big play-up in the Militant about the first Trotskyists to officially be invited to visit the Soviet Union and China?

What purpose did the visit serve? The LSSP people gave a fine speech about Lenin and his life. Did they mention anything about the violation of everything Lenin stood for?

They made speeches and TV broadcasts greeting the Soviet people. But did they greet the struggle of the Soviet masses against the oppression and exploitation of the Soviet bureaucracy?

"We could not do that," they say, "because there is no freedom of speech in the Soviet Union." What kind of greetings did they give then? What a picture! Trotskyists making speeches in the Soviet Union and only the ruling bureaucracy knowing they are Trotskyists!

I think the reasoning of the LSSP leaders in going to the USSR and in failing to express their Trotskyist ideas while there is opportunistic. They indicate this would help them in the Ceylonese elections. According to that explanation, they could also excuse a visit to this country—including the White House—in which they did nothing but make fine speeches about George Washington. If anyone took issue with this they could say, "After all there is a witch hunt in America. It is impossible to praise Socialism there. They might not let us visit again. After all, we were the first Trotskyists to visit President Eisenhower officially."

Would Lenin have gone to Germany when it had a Social Democratic government and allowed his prestige to be used for the benefit of the Social-Democratic betrayers of the German working class? Or did Lenin build a Third International to fight world capitalism?

What is the editorial position of the Militant on the Ceylonese Trotskyists?

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